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Writing gestures in the diaries of Raymundo Faoro (Porto Alegre, 1943-1946)

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Raymundo Faoro (1925-2003), a Brazilian jurist, historian, and writer, is considered one of the most prominent social interpreters in twentieth century Brazil. While studying law in Porto Alegre, he wrote 20 volumes of diaries between 1943 and 1952, a total of almost 6.800 manuscript pages of wholly original content. The purpose of this article is to shed some light on the construction process of this archive, describing and analysing the author's daily writing. I conceive of writing as a practice, consequently, I seek to examine the gestures in Raymundo's writing from an ethnographic perspective, looking for motivations and meanings that presided over the course of his writing. Focusing on the first three volumes of the diaries (1943-1946), I concentrate on descriptions of the period in which the author experiences his first years living in Porto Alegre. I argue that besides presenting facts concerning Faoro's intellectual formation, for the first time, these diaries reveal relevant cultural and social aspects of the period, providing some clues regarding the requisites of becoming an intellectual in twentieth century Porto Alegre and Brazil. In addition to studying diaries as a literary and intellectual genre, I aim to advance the terrain of the anthropological history of writing.

Raymundo Faoro; Diaries; Porto Alegre/Brazil; Anthropology of writing.

Raymundo Faoro (1925-2003), jurista, historiador e escritor brasileiro, é considerado um dos principais intérpretes da sociedade brasileira no século XX. Entre 1943 e 1952, dos 18 aos 26 anos de idade, quando cursava a Faculdade de Direito em Porto Alegre, ele escreveu 20 volumes de diários, totalizando, aproximadamente, 6.800 páginas manuscritas cujo conteúdo esteve, até então, inédito. O objetivo deste artigo é lançar luzes a uma parte do processo de construção desses documentos, descrevendo e analisando a escrita cotidiana de seu autor. Concebendo a escrita enquanto prática, buscarei, etnograficamente, pelos gestos, isto é, pelas ações que, repletas de experiências, motivações e significados, teriam presidido o curso dessa escrita sempre em relação com o contexto da época. Ao deter-me nos 3 primeiros volumes dos diários (1943 – 1946), concentrarei as descrições no período em que o autor experimenta os seus primeiros anos vivendo em Porto Alegre. Argumento que, mais do que apresentar aspectos inéditos sobre a formação de Faoro, os diários revelam aspectos relevantes sobre a cultura e a sociedade da época, fornecendo pistas sobre os requisitos de ingresso em trajetórias intelectuais na Porto Alegre e no Brasil dos meados do século XX. Além de uma contribuição aos estudos dos diários enquanto gêneros literários e intelectuais, lanço reflexões ao terreno da antropologia histórica sobre a escrita.

Raymundo Faoro; Diários; Porto Alegre; Antropologia da Escrita.

Introduction[1]

The diary is a writing genre whose practices can form part of what historian Philippe Artières (1998) called the duty of archiving your own life. If we follow common sense, diaries are generally used as intimate, secret refuges in which the author conducts examinations and records on themselves and their daily life, seeking to prevent themselves from being forgotten (Lejeune 2009, 237). Like any genre, however, the diary can harbour a diversity of forms, uses and meanings. Among many examples in history, between the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, diary writing became popular among intellectuals, politicians and artists who used it as an object of the 'phenomenology of the writer's craft' (Miceli 2001, 86). What we see in these diaries, in contrast to their confinement to private life, are public pieces, components of literary works with a certain autobiographical appeal where their authors emphasise, in the inevitably selective character of memory, their early intellectual gifts. The fact is that, regardless of the forms used, diaries can be seen as documents of historical knowledge and objects of anthropological investigation, highlighting the writing practices they contain.

Between 1943 and 1952, Raymundo Faoro wrote his diaries. During this period, he lived in the city of Porto Alegre, for the most part as a student at the School of Law. In all, he wrote 20 notebooks containing approximately 6,800 pages. In 1952, a notebook was added to this set containing, according to him, an 'effort of memory' to reproduce the 'best pages' of the other volumes that, at that time, he believed had been lost in his move from Porto Alegre to Rio de Janeiro. Soon after, the notebooks were found and years later, beginning in 2020, their entirety was given away exclusively for the development of a research project of which this article is a product[2].

Raymundo Faoro (1925-2003), jurist and writer born in Vacaria, Rio Grande do Sul, is among the main interpreters of Brazil in the twentieth century. His most famous book, *Os donos do poder* [The Owners of Power] (1958), presents, among other analyses, the thesis that the patrimonial domination of the state over society is one of the main features of Brazilian history since the colonial period. His ideas influenced part of the contemporary representations of Brazil's past with regard to state authoritarianism and a fragile construction of democracy. This legacy led Faoro to the presidency of the *Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil* [Brazilian Bar Association] between 1977 and 1979, where he actuated in favour of re-democratisation at the end of the period of civil-military dictatorship in Brazil[3]. In 2000, Faoro was elected to the *Academia Brasileira de Letras* [Brazilian Academy of Letters], and died in 2003.

However, in the 1940s, while writing his diaries, Raymundo[4] was an unknown young man living in the city of Porto Alegre, where he had moved to study at the *Faculdade Livre de Direito*[5]. Between the ages of 18 and 26, decisive years in his formation, he sought to construct and project himself as an intellectual in a context agitated by new ideas and representations of cultural life. His diaries became

1 In addition to my gratitude to the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) and the Department of Anthropology at the University of São Paulo (USP) for providing the institutional and material bases for the successful elaboration of this research, I would like to thank my supervisor Lilia Moritz Schwarcz for her generous, friendly and critical company.

2 The diaries, hitherto unpublished, were provided by the family of Raymundo Faoro, through his son André Faoro, to whom I am grateful for entrusting me with this work.

3 Between 1982 and 1988, Faoro maintained a weekly column in the defunct magazine *Senhor*, which later became *ISTOÉ Senhor*, addressing facts and impasses that, in his view, characterised the period of democratic transition in Brazil after the civil-military dictatorship (Alcântara 2018).

4 In the text, I address the author in two distinct ways: by his first name based on a methodological stance in which the author, at this point still a young, unknown intellectual, is also my interlocutor in the research, and by his surname, as is customary when addressing an established author.

5 The *Faculdade Livre de Direito* [School of Law] was founded in Porto Alegre in 1900. From 1934 onwards, the school became part of the University of Porto Alegre, and in 1950 it became part of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul.

crucial instruments for this formation, while representing and qualifying aspects of the cultural life of the time from his point of view.

In this article, my general objective is to understand the process of construction of these diaries, focusing on the analytical description of Raymundo's daily writing in relation to the contexts of the time. I specifically look for gestures in this writing, that is, for the practices that, between the conceived and the realised, between the subjective individual and the conditions of his context, express everyday experiences full of intentions and meanings associated with the formation of his ideas. In particular, I focus on the first three notebooks, dated between 1943 and 1946, a period in which Raymundo experienced his first few years living in the state capital of Rio Grande do Sul[6].

6 I use the diary of recollected memories written in 1952 as support material for the readings of the first three volumes.

In these notebooks, Raymundo Faoro reveals novel aspects of his formation, whose subjective traits are little known in the specialised literature. However, when scrutinising his writing in the diaries, it is possible to recreate the voices and rhythms of the cultural and intellectual life of the city that linger, condense and are organised in the pages of the notebooks. It is in this relationship between writing practices and the contexts of the time, between the literal and between the lines, inside and outside the diaries, that I focus in this article, in agreement with Schwarcz (2013) for whom taking an individual seriously is to commit to a critical investigation of their role amidst the set of references to and relationships with their time.

Methodologically, such arguments move me, based on the assumption that documents like these should never be seen as mere inert deposits of the past from which worlds are presumed (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992, 34). In addition to literality and materiality, they are real fields replete with practices and tensions from which we can produce anthropological views on the past (Des Chenes 1997, Cunha 2005). Therefore, from the viewpoint of ethnographic research, I conceive of Raymundo's writing as ordinary practices – things that people produce and do in their daily lives (Barber 2007, Fabre 1993), in permanent relation with the contexts that comprise them and, in a sense, make them possible (Davis 1987; Barton and Uta 2010, 5). To achieve this, in parallel with the study of diaries, I use research in newspapers and magazines of the time, together with specialised bibliography.

In the first section, I approach the relationship between Raymundo's writing in his diaries and the city of Porto Alegre, demonstrating how his life in the capital in the early years is simultaneously a reason and a construction implemented through his writing and readings he makes. In the second section, I examine Raymundo's writing in the subsequent moments when he begins living in Belém Novo, a village located in the suburbs of Porto Alegre. In those circumstances where writing becomes more intense, Raymundo shows greater awareness of the role of diaries as an *atelier* for his own intellectual formation.

My intention is to contribute to the knowledge of novel aspects regarding the formation of this author, conceiving his diaries as a literary genre and an archiving of himself. On a more general level, I hope to provide clues to *comprehensions* concerning cultural life paying attention to the traits that, in Faoro's view, constitute

the formation of a writer and thinker in Brazil and in Porto Alegre in the 1940s. Methodologically, I provide perspectives for advances in critical studies on personal and intellectual archives and documents through a historical anthropology of writing.

1. Through the Window: Porto Alegre, the '*novo mundo*' of Raymundo

The year is 1943. It is winter in the city of Porto Alegre, capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul. The city is turning into one of the country's main industrial centres. The end of the Second World War seems to be with reach, but not without leaving an inflation that has increased the price of food since 1941, as reported by the *Correio do Povo*. In Brazil, the people live under the final years of the dictatorship of the Estado Novo. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Porto Alegre has sought to abandon the image of a 'large village', to become modern, both in public spaces and sociability. The city centre is full of construction sites where ruins and demolitions coexist with new constructions. Passers-by witness the widening of avenues that give way to an increasing number of vehicles at the same time that back streets and alleys, spaces of sociability and ordinary jobs, are extinguished. The 'patriarchal townhouses', observed by Gilberto Freyre in 1941[7], give way to increasingly vertical constructions. The so-called 'skyscrapers' become symbols of the modern city, objects that draw the attention of the population and of local writers (Cruz 1994, 44).

As Carl E. Schorske observed of Vienna at the end of the nineteenth century (2012, 26), the practical objectives in redesigning a city are firmly subordinated to the symbolic function of representation. In Porto Alegre, it is no different. The social space is simultaneously the product and producer of bourgeois ideals of 'order' and 'public morals', where images associated with 'beauty' and 'hygiene' should prevail (Pesavento 1994, 94). The popular classes are progressively driven out of the centre to less noble areas, resulting in the formation, concentration and spatial emphasis of poverty and class and race inequalities in marshy lands and factory districts (Monteiro 1995).

Since 1920, in the city centre, between Largo do Medeiros, Rua da Praia and Parque da Redenção, groups of young people with intellectual pretensions have sought to represent the city as a space for novelty, modernity and cosmopolitanism and this had repercussions on the increase in circulation of local newspapers and literary magazines (Ramos and Golin 2007, 108)[8]. Cafes, bookstores and bars are places where authors and aspiring writers gather to observe each other and talk. Rua da Praia is home to the Livraria do Globo [Globo bookshop], Confeitaria Colombo [Colombo pastry shop] and the bars Franz Zitter, Antonello and Casa Salastino. Meetings are also scheduled at Chalé da Praça Quinze and at several bookshops, Guimarães, Universal, Livraria do Comércio and Livraria João Meyer Filho.

In 1940, the Alegrete-born poet, Mário Quintana, published his first book *A rua dos cataventos* [The Street of Weathervanes], beginning a series of poems about

7 In 1946, Gilberto Freyre published an essay in the *Revista Província de São Pedro* presenting some of his impressions of the 'patriarchal architecture' that he personally witnessed in a visit that took place in 1941. See: Freyre, Gilberto. 1946. "Sugestões para o estudo histórico-social do sobrado no Rio Grande do Sul". *Revista Província de São Pedro*, no. 7: 10–5. Porto Alegre: Edição da Livraria do Globo.

8 Raymundo Faoro launched the *Revista Quixote* in 1947, together with other young, local writers.

the streets of Porto Alegre (Hohlfeldt 2009). Quintana's verses follow the images of the city, above all, as formed by everyday life, by the lives that flow from it and circulate in it. 'Olho o mapa da cidade/ Como quem examinasse/ A anatomia de um corpo...' [I look at the map of the city/ As one who examines/ The anatomy of a body...][9].

9 Initial verses of the poem 'O Mapa', by Mário Quintana. The English version is a free translation because, unfortunately, it seems no official version of this work has been published in English.

In the year 1943, the publishing section of the Livraria do Globo – which published Quintana – completes thirteen years of existence and, under the coordination of writer Érico Veríssimo, translates and publishes literature considered avant-garde. In Porto Alegre you can already read James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Thomas Mann, Aldous Huxley, André Gide, Leo Tolstoy, and others. In the space of six years, since the beginning of its activities, books published by the section include works by Theodomiro Tostes, Oswald de Andrade, Murilo Mendes, Jorge de Lima, Athos Damasceno Ferreira, Cecília Meirelles, Câmara Cascudo, Graciliano Ramos, Álvares de Azevedo, Machado de Assis, Castro Alves, Coelho Neto, Olavo Bilac and Mário de Andrade (Bertraso 1992, 22; Martins Filho and Pavão 2003, 7).

In Brazil, in the 1930s and 1940s, the infrastructure necessary for large-scale book production was formed (Miceli 2001, 242). The 'publishing outbreak' is due as much to the production of novels as textbooks (Pontes 1988, 59). Globo is already among the main national publishers. Publications are more beautiful and much cheaper, and translations are considered of higher quality. Porto Alegre thus announces itself as a promising capital for the development of the arts and humanities in South America. It seems likely that many young people are encouraged to pursue careers associated with writing.

This is also the year in which Veríssimo publishes the novel *O resto é silêncio* [The Rest is Silence], in which the daily violence and anonymous dramas of the city serve as a theme for writing (Hohlfeldt 2003, 86). Its release, attacked by a Jesuit priest and local professor, divides the intellectual community of Porto Alegre. On the one hand, a group of upper-class, Catholic bourgeoisie, and on the other, intellectuals for the most part critical of the Estado Novo (Bertraso 1993, 49), demonstrating that the modes of representing the city were under dispute.

Among other magazines of the time, the fortnightly *Revista do Globo* (1929-1967) is already circulating from hand to hand. In it, subjects related to literature, theatre, fashion, and the social and political events of the local society are disseminated and advertised. There are also sensationalist photo-reports that emphasise the contrasts between a poor, black youth and the bourgeois moral standards of consumption in the city (Monteiro 2007). Beginning in 1937, the publishing section created the department '*Mulher e o Lar*' [Woman and the Home], associating and limiting the female audience to topics like fashion, household chores, cooking, child rearing and education, and health.

In July 1943, in a room at the Hotel Palácio, located on Rua Vigário José Inácio, in downtown Porto Alegre, 18-year-old Raymundo Faoro wrote the first pages of his diaries. Advertisements from the time say that the hotel offers furnished rooms and breakfast for monthly renters. It has been almost two years since he left his family in the small town of Caçador, in the western interior of the State of Santa

Catarina; full of plans for intellectual growth, he arrived in Porto Alegre in order to prepare himself for admission to the School of Law, which he achieves in 1944.

From the table where he writes in his room, Raymundo must be able to hear the noises of the busy street. The street is home to the offices of the *Sindicato dos Trabalhadores na Indústria da Construção Civil* [Civil Construction Workers Union] of Porto Alegre and the Carlos Gomes Theatre, where the popular comedies 'Coitado do Libório' [Hapless Libório], by Paulo Orlando, and 'O vira-lata' [The Mutt], by Casarré-Modesto de Sousa are running until September. The film *Casablanca*[10] also premieres in September in local cinemas. Raymundo really likes going to the cinema, but he cannot go too often because it costs him dearly within the tight monthly budget provided by his father Atilio Faoro. American cinema and its stars are featured in several articles in *Revista do Globo*, sharing space with numerous photo-reports on the war in Europe and the growth in urban crime, short stories, poetry, book reviews, and a few articles that honour entrepreneurs and rural landowners of the time.

10 Announced in the newspaper *Correio da Manhã*, September 1943.

In the diaries, Raymundo takes pride in his handwriting, paying attention to the line, the margins and the organisation of the paragraphs. All the pages are numbered, and his very methodical writing is always dated. The notebooks he uses were purchased at Livraria do Globo and other stationery stores in the city, such as Casa Lyceu, located on Rua Marechal Floriano, about a 10-minute walk from Hotel Palácio. The title 'my notebooks' is inscribed on the spine of some of the notebooks. The appearance of a book reveals Raymundo's desire to preserve his own writings, implying the intent, among others, of an 'archiving himself', in the sense elucidated by Philippe Artières (1998). To provide some context, it is important to note that mastery of reading and writing could be seen as a privilege in a Brazil where the slave order persists with vehemence and where half of the population over 15 years old is classified as illiterate.

Raymundo's daily writing seems to be an indispensable activity in which the author intentionally, though never naively, undertakes different records through a 'writing of the self' (Foucault 1983), selecting, organising, rearranging and even constructing facts and ideas about his life. In general, writing is a way of studying, recording information, impressions, analysis about the readings he makes. Some excerpts are transcribed followed by the page numbers from the books they were taken from, demonstrating the intention to retrieve this information in the future. In many ways, the studies he conducts in the notebooks appear in relation to concrete experiences that Raymundo was living in Porto Alegre at that time.

On the first page of the notebook, Raymundo transcribes an excerpt from the novel *Os Maias* [The Maias], by Portuguese writer Eça de Queiroz. On that July 12, 1943, Raymundo thinks of writing as a practice that connects knowledge with the feelings of concrete life, quite distant from formal erudition that at times seems to ignore reality.

> Classics, my eye! Man's first duty is to live. And to do that he needs to be strong and healthy. That is all a sensible education consists of: creating

> health, strength and good habits, developing only the animal in the child and making of him a physically superior being. Just as if he had no soul. The soul comes afterwards... The soul is another luxury – a luxury for grown-ups[11]. (Eça de Queiroz, *The Maias* (2007, p. 52) – New Directions – Translator: Margaret Jull Costa)

In addition to Eça, Raymundo reads and records in his diaries numerous other authors, including Machado de Assis, Aluísio de Azevedo, Monteiro Lobato, Euclides da Cunha, Jorge Amado and the Russian classics by Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. In philosophy and sociology, German authors are more present: Friedrich Nietzsche, Ferdinand Tönnies, Max Weber, Max Scheler, Oswald Spengler. It is under the influence of *The Brothers Karamazov* that, in 1952, he remembers having started writing his diaries: 'I wouldn't go a day without a line'.

On January 23, 1944, Raymundo is in Caçador, where he will remain until the end of February. He is finally about to ingress into law school. He records reading *O cortiço* [The Tenement], by Aluísio de Azevedo (1857-1913). Without delving into the plot, Raymundo is interested in the ability that the Maranhão writer has of 'noting the sociological events' that surround him. However, he senses Azevedo is absent in writing about himself as 'a man, victim of the social situation of his time'.

A day later, Raymundo writes about Machado de Assis, one of his favourite authors and who – perhaps he already knew – would be very present in his studies over the following years. What might be lacking in Azevedo's naturalist literature, is salient in Machado: the 'man'. He writes that the 'man' in the manner of Machado is a 'bundle of amoral and blind instincts' and that his characters are 'constantly concerned with a good material situation that will provide them with safety'.

If, through Azevedo, Raymundo chooses to criticise a literary medium that does not enable the 'vigorous personality of a writer' to develop, in Machado, he discerns with admiration, the irony of constructions of flesh and blood characters constantly concerned with a good material situation.

Reading and writing help to contemplate a 'mental turmoil' into which Raymundo is cast by the readings and his 'anxiety to grow' in contexts that are unfavourable to this. In Azevedo and Machado de Assis, he sees contexts and characters similar to those he knows in his daily life in Porto Alegre. The activities embody the feelings of loneliness and isolation that young people often trigger when describing their first years living in the capital. Thus, writing the diaries could mean a refuge and even company at a time that he lives for the most part alone.

The feelings that are presented in his writing also share concurrent literary styles. Theodomiro Tostes, a local poet, recalls that, at the time, his companions experienced writing less as an expression and more as an evasion or escapism from the environment and routine in the provincial capital (Fretta 2010, 16). Thus, the gestures in Raymundo's writing, while full of feelings and embodying attempts to adjust to re-establishing these expectations, are in line with the style and stereotype of the precocious, misunderstood, reclusive intellectual critical of common

11 Original text: 'Qual clássicos! O primeiro dever do homem é viver. E para isso é necessário ser são e ser forte. Toda a educação sensata consiste nisto: criar a saúde, a força e os seus hábitos, desenvolver exclusivamente o animal, armá-lo duma grande superioridade física. Tal qual como se não tivesse alma. A alma vem depois... A alma é outro luxo. É um luxo de gente grande.' (Eça de Queiroz, *Os Maias*, 1935, p. 81 – Livraria Selo, Limitada Editora).

social life. At various times, it is as if Raymundo uses the diaries as a construction, a positive projection on his own image, therein becoming an exemplary intellectual.

It seems likely that Raymundo is aware that writing comprises many other acts and gestures besides recording ink on paper. Like Azevedo and Machado, he tries to write down and elaborate on the events that surround him in Porto Alegre, trusting that reading and writing grant him a different perspective of understanding concerning social reality. Through writing, he sees and constructs a capital filled with inhabitants determined to increase their own patrimony. Meanwhile, he thinks about the image of an intellectual committed to portraying his own social context, following one of the traits he perceives in the regionalist literature of the time.

> A decisive fact in my formation was coming to Porto Alegre. Full of childish pride, with weak but daring weapons, I intended to reign on this soil, for me, up to that point, resplendent and auspicious. Soon however, too soon, I began to discover the abyss between my dreams and the cold reality that transpired in the capital of Rio Grande do Sul. And the result was twofold: I rid myself of the black disbelief towards Rio Grande and its people and the telluric prison in which I found myself was revealed to me, in relation to Santa Catherina. I understood that all my strength came from this, I understood the nature of the frog, with pretensions of flying, to which I was confined. The state of mind resulting from this shock is still familiar to me (1946).

On April 25, 1944, Raymundo is reading *Admirável Mundo Novo* [Brave New World] by Aldous Huxley. The work is probably circulating among the readers of the city, since it is a recently released translation by the publishing section of Livraria do Globo. Broadly speaking, the work draws attention to a dystopian future where totalitarianism, scientific reason and hedonism predominate. Raymundo sees in the book the catastrophes and massacres caused by the war in Europe, but his writing seems more impregnated by the desire to criticise the local social life, where he bears witness to the 'disappearance of emotions'. In his own 'Mundo Novo', in conversation circles and in the sensationalist publications of local magazines, he observes a growing taste for 'horrendous crimes', according to him, arising from the most 'primitive' conditions of human beings. All around him, he sees men, products of this environment, resorting to the 'crudest of activities': sports and boxing matches. Besides Porto Alegre, reading between the lines, Raymundo is probably talking about the boy he was when he was 10 years old. At school he had earned the nickname 'philosopher' and unlike most of his classmates, he could not swim and had little affinity for sports. His refuge would have been books, which, within the autobiographical intent of his diaries, explains the construction of a precocious intellectual.

In more direct analysis, Raymundo perceives and describes Porto Alegre as a place formed by Azoreans and exalted by descendants of German immigrants who

had graduated from farmers. It is one of the 'most Carthaginian cities in Brazil', thus understanding it as predominantly petty bourgeois where great personal ambitions were not achieved. According to Raymundo, the city's inhabitants tend to be routine, lacking in artistic life and confined within families. In the city's bars, he sees small circles of German descendants getting together to make music while consuming beer.

In his interpretations, Raymundo focuses on the details of everyday life and the dynamics of interpersonal relationships, inside and outside the brick townhouses. On the wall of a room in a townhouse in the city centre, he recreates a portrait of the bourgeois family, an 'inexpressive, worthless painting'. On May 16, 1946, he names his fictitious family in the portrait as the Araújos, the father is likely a 'head' of industry or a merchant 'boss', or a 'landlord' of apartments in the city. He probably has a membership to the Trade Club and the Country Club. The male children surrender themselves to idleness, until the moment they marry and rise to a liberal profession in their father's company. Discussions between parents and children, at least in childhood, revolve around good attire and the search for companions of the same social and economic stature. In contrast, the women – in Raymundo's mind – restricted to an 'eternal feminine', are watched over by their mothers who are also their confidants. More so than the men, they are assiduous readers. They read fashionable novels and are therefore also more fluent in writing.

'Love' in the bourgeois city, writes Raymundo, 'is not the child of Cupid, but of Euclidean geometry'. They more often marry for economic interests and religion operates as a 'practical instrument to curb the passions and feelings that they might hope to explore'. Finally, Raymundo sees in Porto Alegre individuals who are frightened by any threat of change beyond the limits of the ideal of a temperate life.

Never completely original or naive, the ways in which Raymundo represents the city and its bourgeois sociability, while simultaneously producing them, are also themselves products of a context in which intellectual and moral disputes occur. Around the *Instituto Histórico e Geográfico do Rio Grande do Sul* [Historical and Geographical Institute], founded in 1920, up to that point in time, naturalist formulas prevailed in regional historical narratives, placing excessive emphasis on the categories of race, environment, and frontier. Until 1923, interpretations of the past highlighted the geographic isolation of Rio Grande do Sul, its late occupation by the Portuguese Crown, Azorean colonisation and Farroupilha separatism. From these representations expressed in a historiographical construction based, for the most part, on genealogical and biographical narratives – linear, homogeneous, and heroic from a military point of view – it is likely that Raymundo studied the elites and their illustrious heirs of the Empire.

However, 1940s Porto Alegre bears witness to the growth of more plural representations, commencing with traditionalist and non-traditionalist modernisms. As affirmed by Nedel (2007), this in part is due to the greater insertion of the perspectives of outsiders in regionalist interpretations. And it is certainly under

the influences of culturalism and the 'folkloric density' proposed, for example, by Gilberto Freyre and Câmara Cascudo, that Raymundo prefers to write about the more detailed aspects of bourgeois families, both material and immaterial. As a perspective of entering this intellectual world that is imminent, and in addition to the logical use given to the word and to Parnassianism, he trusts that he will encounter in feelings, tastes, habits and values the relevant sociological expressions to understand the Porto Alegre that he inhabits. His literary style and the very reason for writing in the diaries embody these tendencies.

Raymundo chooses the emergence of the urban bourgeoisie as the focus of his attention, but leaves out the formation of the peripheries of the city, a somewhat eloquent absence. When noting his observations on Azevedo's *O cortiço,* he chooses, for example, not to record the racial ills that run through the tenement of the Portuguese João Romão in the midst of the urban modernisation process in Rio de Janeiro. He prefers to write briefly about the author, about his literary context, about the constitutive traits of naturalism, finally. However, in 1938, Athos Damasceno Ferreira[12] had already published his novel *Moleque* [Urchin], in which he realistically addresses the daily life and social problems of a boy descended from enslaved people living on the peripheries of Porto Alegre.

12 Athos Damasceno Ferreira (1902-1975) was a local writer. He produced chronicles, poetry and fiction, having worked as a translator at Livraria Globo and as a contributor to the *Revista Província de São Pedro* and the newspaper *Correio do Povo*.

The city engraved in the pages of Raymundo's notebooks is the product of feelings, everyday experiences, readings in sociology and novels in circulation at the time, as well as the effort, in relation to the context, of the construction of style on the part of the author. The Porto Alegre of Raymundo is the provincial capital, characterised by bourgeois townhouses, where intellectual life is limited and those dedicated to the arts and literature are frowned upon by the elites. For now, it is not the city of those driven out, of the factory outskirts, of racism, and of poverty. It is a city that, while it is constructed, gives meaning to the writing of diaries of someone who projects himself towards a life in the world of letters.

2. The many hands that write the diaries: Belém Novo, Raymundo's 'magic mountain'

On May 9, 1946, Raymundo no longer lives at the Hotel Palácio, in Porto Alegre. He is in Belém Novo, a village located among the suburbs of the capital. He spends part of that day reading Tolstoy's *War and Peace,* a work he qualifies as 'superior' due to its sociological importance. Raymundo had not written in his diaries for more than a year, during which time he entered the School of Law and helped organise political rallies in Caçador. What we can access with regard to this sixteen-month pause, between July 1944 and November 1945, are the memories selected and condensed by the writer. Raymundo does not mention the reasons for this pause in writing: as for its resumption, the reasons are plentiful.

Returning to the diaries, he realises that writing never occurs spontaneously, nor in a totally original manner, as he had believed in his early years in Porto Alegre. He reflects that the practice will always be motivated and, in a way, only made possible from previous or ongoing readings. Therefore, he begins to read

even more, reading as he writes and likely aware that, at that moment, the hands that influence the writing of his diaries are many besides his own.

On the same day, Raymundo remembers that a year previously, on May 8, 1945, the night that coincided with the fall of the Nazi regime in Germany, an event altered his routine and the course of his goals. On that date, he was visiting Caçador to participate in a political rally in which, according to his intentions, he would project himself as an 'opposition leader'. But on that day, the urge to speak was interrupted by a fever.

> Leaving the rally, I went to the pharmacy and had an injection against the flu and, when offered by someone, I had a glass of fortifying wine. At night, however, retiring earlier than usual, after coughing in the hallway of my room, I felt that something hot was coming up to my mouth. I spat. It was blood. I spat again. It was blood again. And so on, for some time. While they went to call the doctor, and even after his arrival, I felt a melancholy despondency (May 9, 1946).

With a feeling of discouragement and pain in his back and shoulders, Raymundo returns to Porto Alegre without delivering his speech at the rally. A diagnosis of tuberculosis came with the choice to live in Belém Novo. Raymundo does not directly describe the reasons for this change; however, I perceive them through the relationships between the reasons for his writing and the context of the time.

Belém Novo is a settlement located in the southern portion of Porto Alegre, on the banks of the Guaíba River. From his new residence, in a room at the Hotel Cassino, Raymundo reports that he only goes out for medical consultations in Porto Alegre and, occasionally, on Sundays, to meet his friend Elmo Ribeiro[13], with whom he holds long 'lectures' on politics, human behaviour and on social life in Porto Alegre.

Belém Novo is identified and represented at the time as a summer resort, associated with vacation and rest periods, especially for the Porto Alegre elite. In the local imagination, the village illustrates the culture of bathing in the sea, which began in Europe in the eighteenth century and was reproduced in Brazilian lands alongside lakes and rivers as well. The Hotel Casino, by the lake, follows the cultural model, hosting typical activities of modern life in the summer: festive lunches, garden parties, sports tournaments, balls, and games of chance, all surrounding the baths in Guaíba (Garcia 2019).

While reading and taking notes on *War and Peace*, Raymundo observes the social attendance in Belém Novo. On the one hand, the 'natives', the population that 'grew up' here 'attached' to the place; on the other, there are the 'vacationists' who stay only during the hot months. Raymundo observes the rivalry and contrasts between these groups. The vacationists go to restaurants and clubs accessed by members only. In contrast, the 'natives' live in the 'dirtier' and more 'abject' bars, in commercial houses where the sell everything. Writing sets watertight divisions and, through them, it is possible to identify the sociological issues dear to Ray-

13 Elmo Pilla Ribeiro was a colleague of Raymundo Faoro at law school, and later became a professor at the same school in the *Departamento de Direito Público* [Department of Public Law] and *Filosofia do Direito* [Philosophy of Law] (Santos 2000).

mundo. He reflects on the decadence of rural aristocracies and the emergence of the urban bourgeoisie, both in Tolstoy's Russia and in Porto Alegre, between personal and patriarchal subordination to *coronéis*, and economic subordination to bankers and capitalists. According to Raymundo, summers in Belém Novo were exemplary moments to observe this phenomenon.

However, due to its natural attributes, Belém Novo is also seen as a 'sanatorium', an ideal place for the temporary residence of people undergoing treatment for tuberculosis. The place is suitable for isolating the sick in ventilated and well-lit places, as opposed to the unhealthy and bohemian characteristics of the urban centres of the time (Bertolli Filho 1991, 56). In the newspaper *O Momento*, published in December 1945 in the city of Caxias do Sul, there was a 'precept of the day' that stated tuberculosis was an 'abundant source of contagion' and, since it was practically impossible to control all its sources, 'it is up everyone to fortify the organism'.

Despite not going into detail in writing, for Raymundo, the Hotel Cassino could be his own Berghof sanatorium. Thus, Belém Novo – and the diaries – could be compared to his 'Magic Mountain', a context in which he became more attached to life, in the urgent need to do something capable of confronting those difficult years, in the face of so many uncertainties. Hence, from November 27, 1945, nine months after suffering the first haemoptysis, Raymundo decided that not even a day would go by without writing, 'writing down everything, thoughts, observations and phases of life, looking, for the most part, to relate them to intellectual motives'. In that moment of illness, reading, among others, the work of Thomas Mann published by the publisher Globo, Raymundo probably felt that 'the genius of disease was more human than the genius of health' (Mann 2018, 465) and this launches into a kind of intellectualisation of the very condition in which the diaries fulfil a central function capable of recording and giving concreteness to his reflections and experiences.

On one of the visits to his doctor, Dr. Ricaldone[14], Raymundo recalls having leafed through a book written by the doctor and professor Manuel Madeira Rosa[15] that included a list of 'famous tuberculosis patients' to explain how certain 'germs' of the disease could stimulate intellectual activity. Goethe and Byron were probably on that list, authors that Raymundo read and whose creative motivations were based on introspection and self-observation. In Raymundo's pen, Goethe is the one who 'wrote that only those who conquer it every day are worthy of freedom'. In Brazil, Goethe representatives for Raymundo would be Alvarez Azevedo (1831-1852) and Castro Alves (1847-1871).

Because of the medical treatment he undertakes, the specialised books, the reading of novels, the newspaper notes and the popular knowledge he accesses, the tuberculosis experienced by Raymundo is equally an object of scientific history and the history of representations and mentalities, as advocated by Le Goff (1984, 8). And it is in these relationships that he comes to believe that the 'disease' is hastening his maturity and developing his writing, which now has a more intense, disciplined pace than it did at the Hotel Palácio.

14 According to announcements in the *Correio do Povo* between 1941 and 1946, Dr. Ricaldone was one of the most influential specialists in 'lung diseases' in Porto Alegre. The doctor attended at the Vera Cruz Building, on Avenida Borges de Medeiros, in the city centre.

15 Madeira Rosa was a physician and professor at the *Faculdade de Medicina* [School of Medicine] of Porto Alegre.

In addition to seclusion and the sense of urgency to record one's own life, writing records the frequencies of its writer's frustration. At that moment, Raymundo conceived writing as a form of training and his daily practice as a discipline. In the memory record of 1952, he writes that this decision stemmed from his poor performance in the elaboration of political speeches at rallies in Caçador. Until then, he considered 'political combat' was the ideal plan where oratorical skills confirmed intellectual gifts. This conception of his changed from 1946 onwards, but it is important to note that at the time the idea prevailed in his midst that a good bachelor is one who has mastered words, writing, conversations and public speaking. Such attributes can be associated with the very image of the law courses at the time – including the one he was already studying in Porto Alegre – which were somewhat geared towards a polyvalent intellectual formation (Miceli 2001, 114).

> In 1945, an academic of rare brilliance, I, in Caçador, shone for society when, with the emergence of politics, I played the opposition leader. I set up the first rally, where I would stun people with the opening speech. I realised, then, that I did not know how to write the play that would astound the State and Brazil. With the pen in hand, in front of the paper, nothing good came out, obscure, heavy ideas came to me and commonplaces ran over each other in my imagination. The orator lacked a tongue – that is the sad and overwhelming reality. I remedied the 'imbroglio' as best I could and set out to overcome the small, almost insignificant, insufficiency (1952).

In this intent, Raymundo intensifies his studies from academic works to fictional literature. With Max Weber, Karl Marx, Ferdinand Tönnies, Karl Mannheim and Max Scheler, Raymundo initiates his first investment in sociology, reflecting on the paired concepts individual/society, community/society, utopia/ideology, reason/emotion. Together with these studies, he presents accounts of his life which are usually chosen to illustrate or to introduce arguments that he learns from the readings. In 1945, he does so not only with Tolstoy, but also, for example, with Antônio Vieira's sermons, from which he perceives the relationship between poetry and oratory. In March 1946, Raymundo expressed excitement with the reading of *Terras do sem-fim*[16] by Jorge Amado, published in 1943. For him, Amado is an author who he views as a 'great personality', who knows how to create from the own land where he lives or his 'regional spirit'.

16 Translated into English as *The Violent Land*, by Samuel Putnam (1945).

> Jorge Amado lives the abyssal life of nature, of the silent, deep conflict between landscape and blood, far from the spirit with its constellation of values. To corroborate the assertion, it is worth noting the fact that man is a primary being in contact with his purely instinctual and purely vital elements. Even in 'Terras do Sem Fim' the search for ownership does not come from the desire for economic value, but from the need for absolute dominion over the landscape, perhaps from a desire for security against

fundamental fear...

In Belém Novo, Raymundo becomes even more interested in certain regionalist literature that, to a certain extent, is committed to realistically portraying the social problems that characterise the relationship between the individual and the land. The eye that sees the village is the product of combinations between this style and the academic literature he studies. It is an approval for him to construct a writing in his diaries where the conceived, the theoretical and the lived are aligned in the formation of his ideas. For Raymundo, in March 1946, what Amado, José Lins do Rego, Monteiro Lobato and Graciliano Ramos did was a 'profound message of language renewal'.

From April 1946 onwards, Raymundo begins mentioning the German philosopher Hermann Von Keyserling, citing excerpts from his travel diaries. The enthusiasm with this author reveals the depth of writing as a laboratory, where the thinker constructs not only his ideas, but his own self-image, aligning academic knowledge with his everyday experiences. An already popular author in some Brazilian intellectual circles[17], Von Keyserling used his diaries as public pieces to elevate and even 'dramatise' his intellectual gifts, as he himself makes clear in the introduction to volume I (1925).

It is no mere coincidence that at the same moment, Raymundo also began reading the diaries of French writer André Gide, with whom he agrees that writing style is also linked to the writer's intimate feeling. Even more than Von Keyserling, Gide constructs his diaries as pieces of a larger literary work, where autobiographical consciousness blends with fiction and its future legacy (Freixas 1996). Everything leads us to believe that Raymundo is aware that writing diaries can act as a requirement for entering the world of letters.

Therefore, much more than the act of recording on paper itself, Raymundo uses writing as a study, in his words, as an *atelier* from which his future works should emerge[18]. Writing also comprises the acts of 'mental hygiene' against the 'anxieties' and 'resentments' caused by tuberculosis and the frustrations with the social environment of the time. In this atelier, Raymundo writes as if sculpting a self-portrait of the intellectual he intends to become. In a self-portrait, an author composes with what he selects from his memories, his studies and his experiences in the city, sometimes softening, sometimes exaggerating his features in accordance with the stylistic context and the values he apprehends at the era and the medium.

There is no doubt that in this 'narrative craft' by Raymundo, to use Davis' (1987) expression, there are many voices or creative elements that present themselves directly and indirectly in what I call writing gestures. In addition to individual authorship, I encounter characters with their different proposals, theses, hesitations, dilemmas, and contradictions. They are known and anonymous voices, authors and non-authors, from a poet seated in front of a bar table located on Rua da Praia, a passer-by on Rua Vigário José Inácio, and a vacationist staying at the Hotel Cassino in Belém Novo, to a German philosopher writing his travel

17 At the time in question, Keyserling was an author of curiosity among some Brazilian intellectual circles. Mário de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade read his work with some enthusiasm (Faria 2013). In a somewhat exotic tone and from a Eurocentric point of view, Keyserling's travel diaries expressed interpretations about different peoples and ethnicities indicating a positive view of cultural differences. Keyserling used his accounts to criticise the 'accelerated time' of modernity, relating it to the 'decadence of the West'. In the author's broader project, we find his defence of the formation of an intellectual elite based on an aristocratic idea of cosmopolitanism.

18 In another article, I described this *atelier* of the self in greater detail (Alcântara 2021).

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diaries moving, full of curiosities and projects, through places up to that moment unknown to him.

Final considerations

Under ethnographic scrutiny, Raymundo Faoro's diaries present, in an original manner, aspects about the formation of the future jurist, essayist and historian. Between 1943 and 1946, he is an unknown young man exploring the city of Porto Alegre while entering the School of Law. In the course of writing these diaries, I followed and described the records of the works he read while, directly or indirectly, narrating facts and reflections about his life in the city. Far beyond common sense concerning this genre of writing and archiving oneself, the diaries are used by Raymundo as pieces essential to his intellectual formation, in the present and addressed to the future, in the same manner as the German philosopher Von Keyserling and the French writer André Gide, two important references for the author.

Besides revealing the individual in his particularities, in this article, I have argued that these diaries, as documents from an archive from which anthropological knowledge about the past can be produced, are vital pieces for understanding cultural and social aspects of Porto Alegre and of Brazil at the time, focusing on standards and requirements present in the training of writers and thinkers. Trusting that texts are always selective contextual versions and products of many social and cultural tensions and disputes, I maintain that Raymundo's writings are practices full of gestures, that is, of actions, intentions, experiences, and meanings undertaken by the author always in relation to his context.

Thus, in the encounters between the author and his contexts, directly or indirectly, in the presence and absence, in the literal and in the contradictions, Raymundo's writing reveals characters, passers-by, writers, acquaintances and anonymous persons, between personal relationships and distant figures, between the plans of everyday life in the city and life in books, and, finally, between the concrete and the idealised. In some form or another, all intervene in Raymundo's writing, from the calligraphy and content, to the uses and intentions that govern these practices that increasingly take up the writer's time in the years of his formation and that finally shape the foundations of the ideas of the 'social interpreter'.

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